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FRIENDLY ANSWER

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A LETTER, written by a Presbyterian
to his Friend, touching Presbytery.

In which

ANSWER and POSTSCRIPT, is plainly and
fairly made appear, how justly the horrid Sin of
SCHISM, and sundry other gross ERRORS, are
chargeable upon the PRESBYTERIANS in Scotland.

Here also is offered, A reasonable Answer to the Papists, who charge
all the Reform'd, without Distinction, with Heresy and Schism.

Reasonable Satisfaction is here likewise given to those, who charge the
present SUFFERING CHURCH of SCOTLAND with In-
novations; such as, Praying for the Dead, Anointing the Sick
with Oyl, &c.

And lastly, The DIVINE RIGHT of EPISCOPACY, is here
fairly established; and the TRUE CHURCH described.

By a Suffering Member of the Afflicted Church of Scotland.

Ask for the old Paths, where is the good Way, and walk therein. Jer. vi. 16.
If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man and a Pub-
lican. Matth. xviii. 17.

I beseech you Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions and Offences contrary to the
Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. Rom. xvi. 17.



Edinburgh: Printed in the Year M. DCC. XXVI.



HAVING read the following Friendly Answer of a Letter, written by a Presbyterian to his Friend, touching Presbytery, &c. I do find it a very well composed Work, agreeable to the Sentiments of the Church, and worthy of Approbation.

Edinb. April 29,
1726.

J. E.



A

Friendly Answer, &c.

S I R,

THE Letters you sent me of the third Instant, which are the *first*, I declare, of yours, that ever came to my Hands, were most acceptable : Especially when I have learned from them and from the Bearer, that your *Family* are now all in good Health : Of which, Sir, I assure you, we all *here* are heartily glad.

From yours I am also informed of your *Lady's* Patience and yours under * Afflictions ; which is mighty satisfying, because *Patience*, as you very well know, is a most

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* They had a hopeful young Child then lately dead.

necessary *Christian Vertue*, and the Gift of God, and ought to be improved by *Thankfulness*.

But, Sir, that Part of yours, where you tell me, *You do exceedingly rejoice because I am turn'd Whig*, is indeed pretty singular: 'Tis what I must own I was heartily surpris'd at. For, notwithstanding all the great Encouragements, that by the *present Laws* are now annexed to that *Perswasion*, which certainly are mighty powerful Temptations, and which I know prevail with very many; I do assure you, Sir, while I keep *sober*, and do enjoy the right Use of my Reason, that is the Thing, by the *Grace* of God, which I will never do: For *Whig* and *Schismatick* I ever understood to be convertible Terms.

And truly, Sir, I must tell you, I cannot but in some Sort admire, how a *Gentleman* of so much Learning and Penetration beyond the *Vulgar*, as you, I am perswaded, are Master of, should delight in a State of *Schism*, or rejoice to think that your good *Friend* were therein.

I know, the *Presbyterians* in *Scotland*, who are now become mighty powerful and very numerous, make very light of this Sin of *Schism*: And your *Teachers* do most rarely or never take Pains, to represent to their

their *Hearers*, the dangerous Consequences of it.

However, Sir, this was very far from the Judgment, and the Practice of our blessed SAVIOUR and his *Apostles* : For they have very often, and most clearly laid open the Odiousness of that Sin, which is easily observable, by the diligent *Reader*, through the whole Writings of the *New Testament*.

And therefore, Sir, because, partly through your *Teachers* Default, you may have forgot, let me take the Freedom to mind you, that this horrid Sin of **Schism**, which consists in a wilful, and causeless, and very often in an ignorant Separation from the Church, is directly opposite to that outward visible Communion and Fellowship, proposed by the ninth Article of the *Apostles Creed*; and which is therefore absolutely requisite and necessary amongst all the *Members* of the Church.

By the Nature of which Communion, all Catholic, I mean all Sound and Orthodox Christians all the World over, as they have Occasion to meet together, are indispensibly bound, not to make separate and divided Communions, nor to set up Altar against Altar, as Hereticks and Schismaticks do : But, on the contrary, to unite themselves into One Body, and to join together

into *One Communion* and *Fellowship*, for Prayers, Praises, Sacraments and all other religious Duties.

Now, Sir, the Reason of this necessary *visible Communion* amongst the *Members* is most obvious, and most clear; and that because the *Church* it self, the *Mystical Body* of CHRIST, is but *One*. The *true, visible, Catholick Church*, as the holy Scriptures, and our common *Creed* from thence do teach us, is but *One*; neither can it be but *One*, because CHRIST its *Head* is but *One*.

One CHRIST can be but *One Head*, and *One Head* can have but *One Body*: CHRIST can be but *One Husband*, and so, by the Christian Law, can have but *One Spouse*. He is but *One* * *Chief Corner-stone*, and therefore can be sufficient but for *One Building*.

But this great *Body*, the *One, True, Visible, Catholick Church*, whereof our Lord JESUS CHRIST is the *alone*, and the *only supreme Head*, and *universal Governor*; this † *One Fold* under *One Shepherd*, as St. John calls it, for Order and Government's Sake, is distributed into many particular *Churches*, with particular *Bishops* and *Governors* over them, who are the respective *subordinate Heads*, and *Principles of Uni-*
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* Matt. 21. 42. and 1. Pet. 2. 6. † Jo. 10. 16.

ty to those several Churches, and do serve as so many (a) *Foundation-stones* and *Pillars* to this great *Spiritual Building*.

And all these Churches, Sir; such for Instance were of old, the (b) Churches of *Ju-dea*, the Churches of (c) *Samaria* and of *Gali-lee*, and the seven Churches mentioned in the first three Chapters of the *Revelation*, &c. All these Churches, I say, and all the particular *Members* in each Church, being linked together by *brotherly Love* and *Charity*, professing the same *Faith*, entertaining the same *Hope*, being baptised with the same *Baptism*, and made thereby *Heirs* of the same gracious *Promises*; being directed by the same *Spirit*, govern'd by the same *Hierarchy* and *Laws*, taught by the same heavenly *Doctrine*, joining in the same publick *Prayers*, and made Partakers of the same *Sacramental Bread* and *Cup*; do, by these necessary Bonds, of this *external visible Communion*, make up the *One, Holy, Visible, Catholick Church* of CHRIST.

And in this very Manner, the first Christians, whose Practice is left upon Record for our Imitation; the first Christians, I say, having been, by (d) *St. Peter* and the other *Apo-stles* of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, carefully

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(a) *Eph.* 2. 20. (b) *Gal.* 1. 22. (c) *Acts* 9. 31. (d) *Acts* 2.

instructed into the necessary *Principles* and *Duties* of the Christian Religion, and by them admitted into the Christian Church, through the *Door* and *Gate* of *Baptism*, became all, as *St. Luke* in the Beginning of the *Acts* tells us (a), of one Heart, and of one Soul; — (b) and continued stedfastly together in the *Apostles Doctrine* and *Fellowship*, and in breaking of Bread, and in Prayers: — (c) And unto the Church (which in this Fashion they did constitute) the Lord added daily such as should be saved.

By which one Instance, among many that might be produced, we are already taught (you see how suitable it is, and how agreeable to the *Gospel-Institution*) that all Christians, as Occasion offers, should thus unite and join together in all the publick Offices of Religion.

Indeed, Sir, 'tis by Means of this outward visible Communion, that we confirm one another's Faith, that we encourage one another's Hope, and do enliven and provoke one another's Charity. By this Means also, we shew our selves, all of us, both Ecclesiasticks and Laicks, in our own proper Rank and Station, to be Members of the same My-

(a) *Acts* 4. 32. (b) *ib.* 2. 42. (c) *ib.* 2. 47.

Mystical Body, and Subjects of the same Spiritual Kingdom.

But, Sir, they who wilfully break this indispensable *Union*, which ought thus to be kept inviolable amongst all the *Members* of CHRIST'S *Body*, and do separate themselves from the *Church* of GOD, by crumbling into *Parties* and *Factions*, and by setting up opposite *Altars*, in Disobedience to our spiritual *Superiors* the *Bishops*, who, as is said above, are the respective subordinate *Heads*, and *Principles* of *Unity*, under JESUS CHRIST, in the *Catholick Church*; being the true, the undoubted and lineal *Successors* of the *College of Apostles*, to whom our blessed LORD, immediately before his Ascension, gave special and positive Command and Authority, exclusive of the *seventy Disciples*, and of all other inferior *Church-Officers*, (none such being then present) to instruct, to plant and to govern his *Church*, and to *ordain* and *consecrate* fit Persons to succeed them in that great and weighty Charge. Which is the clear and certain Import of these Words of our LORD, (a) *As my Father sent me, even so send I you*; (b) *and lo, I am with you always, even unto the End of the World.*

All, I say, who thus divide from the *Church*, and do in this Manner act in Opposition to the
Gover-

(a) Jo. 20. 21. (b) Matt. 28. 20.

Governors and Pastors of it, abiding in, (a) and earnestly contending for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, are **Schismaticks**; who, by being such, do miserably exclude themselves, from all the *covenanted, and ordinary Means*, and *Terms* of Pardon and Mercy, offered by JESUS CHRIST in the Gospel.

At which Assertion, however much the Guilty may be disobliged, it is nevertheless a most certain and unquestionable *Truth*: Because, as a very learned Doctor of the Church, Bishop Pearson, in his incomparable Exposition of the Creed, most judiciously hath observed, (b) "CHRIST never appointed two Ways
" to go to Heaven, nor did he build a Church
" to save some, and make another Institution
" for other Mens Salvation. (c) There is
" no other Name under Heaven given among
" Men, whereby we must be saved, but by
" the Name of JESUS; and that Name is no
" otherwise given under Heaven, than in the
" Church. (d) As none were saved from
" the Deluge, but such as were within the
" Ark of Noah, framed for their Reception
" by the Command of GOD: (e) As none of
" the First-born of the Israelites in Egypt
" lived, but such as were within those Habitations, whose Door-Posts were sprinkled
" with

(a) Jude v. 3. (b) See Dr. Pearson on the Creed, 9th Edit. Pag. 349. (c) Acts 4. 12. (d) Gen. 6. 14. &c. (e) Ex. 12. 23.

" with *Blood* by the Appointment of God,
 " for their Preservation: (a) And, as none of
 " the Inhabitants of *Jericho* could escape the
 " *Fire* or *Sword*, but such as were within
 " the *House of Rachab*, for whose Protecti-
 " on a *Covenant* was made: So none shall
 " ever (unless through an unrevealed and ex-
 " traordinary Manner) escape the eternal Wrath
 " of God, which belong not to the *Church*
 " of God.

Again, JESUS CHRIST himself, as saith
 St. Paul, being the (b) *Head*, we the *Mem-*
bers of his *Mystical Body*; (c) *He* being
 the *True Vine*, as saith St. John, we the
Branches: What *Life* can there be, I pray
 you, in a *Member* (in a *Hand* or a *Foot* for
 Instance) when cut off and separated from the
Body? Or what *Sap* in a *Branch*, when
 lopp'd off from the *Root*?

'Tis for this Reason, Sir, that in Holy
 Scripture, **Schismaticks** are stiled (d)
Withered Branches, (e) *False Apostles*,
 (f) *False Brethren*. They are by St. Paul,
 in his first Epistle to *Timothy*, said to be (g)
proud, knowing nothing. And in his Epistle
 to *Titus*, they are called (h) *unruly, vain*
Talkers and Deceivers, — whose *Mouths*
must be stopped. Our

(a) Josh. 2. 8, &c. (b) Eph. 1. 22, 23. (c) Jo. 15. 5.
 (d) Ja. 5. 6. (e) II. Cor. 11. 13. (f) II. Cor. 11. 16. (g)
 I. Tim. 6. 14. (h) Tit. 1. 10, 11.

Our blessed LORD, with great Care, forewarns his Disciples of all such: (a) *Beware*, says He, of false Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps Clothing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves. And again, (b) *Take heed*, saith He, that no Man deceive you; — For there shall arise false Christs and false Prophets, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders, in so much, that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very Elect.

The same Apostle St. Paul, gives also diligent Warning of these **Schismaticks**, to the Governors and Pastors of the Church at Ephesus, in these Words, (c) *Take heed*, says he, unto your selves, and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers; — For I know, that after my departing shall grievous Wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock. Also, of your own selves shall Men arise, speaking perverse Things, to draw away Disciples after them, &c.

And so exceedingly sinful and dangerous, Sir, is the joining in *Worship* with **Schismaticks**, of however small Consequence some Persons of my particular Acquaintance do esteem it, that St. Paul hath expressly discharged all *Fellowship* and *Communion* with them. Notice well what he saith.

(a) *We*

(a) *Matth. 7. 15.* (b) *Ib. 24. 4.* (c) *Acts 20. 28, 29, 30.*

(a) *We command you Brethren, in the Name of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, that ye withdraw your selves from every Brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the Tradition which he hath received of us. And again, (b) I beseech you Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions and Offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: For they that are such, serve not our Lord JESUS CHRIST, but their own Belly, and by good Words and fair Speeches, deceive the Hearts of the Simple. And sundry other Texts to the same Purpose.*

From *Antiquity* also, Sir, a Cloud of Witnesses could be brought for establishing this Truth: But, for Brevity's Sake, two or three Testimonies may reasonably suffice. *St. Cyprian Bishop of Carthage*, who flourished before the Middle of the third Century, his Words are these,

“(c) **Schismaticks**, says he, tho’ they
 “are slain for confessing CHRIST, yet is the
 “Stain of **Schism** so very deep, their very
 “Blood cannot wash it out. It is an inexpi-
 “able Crime, from which a Man cannot be
 “purged, tho’ he die for CHRIST. ———
 “Let him give himself to fry in the Flames,
 “or to be torn in Pieces by wild Beasts, that
 “shall

(a) II. *Thes.* 3. 6. (b) *Rom.* 16. 17. (c) *Cypr. De unitate Ecclesie*, Pag. 113, 114. Edit. Oxon.

“ shall not crown his *Faith* with Victory, but
 “ pass only for the Punishment of his Treachery. He may be slaughter’d, but he shall
 “ not be crown’d ; — For that Man cannot be one of CHRIST’S Martyrs, who is
 “ not one of the *Church’s* Members, &c.”

Again, ’tis declared by the second *Canon* of the *Synod of Antioch*, held in the Year 341. “ That ’tis not lawful to communicate with Persons excommunicated ; nor, even in private Houses, to pray with those who keep not the Communion of the *Church* : These therefore who separate from their own *Church*, ought not to be received into any other *Church*, &c.”

Lastly, The sixth *Canon* of the said *Council* runs thus, “ If any *Presbyter* or *Deacon*, despising his own *Bishop*, shall separate from the *Church*, and by himself hold Assemblies, and rear up another *Altar*, refusing to obey his *Bishop*, once and again calling for his Obedience ; that *Presbyter* or *Deacon* shall be deposed, and shall never be restored to his Honour, &c.”

Now, Sir, you may pretend to justify, and acquit your self from *Guilt*, in this weighty and terrible *Affair*, as much as you please : But, that the *Presbyterians* in this *Kingdom*, and you, by being in *Communion* with them, are actually engaged into this sad, this
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woful and miserable State of **Schism**, is most undeniable; no Matter of Fact is capable of clearer Demonstration.

For *Episcopal Government*, Sir, or a Superiority and Subordination amongst the *Clergy*, which is clearly of *Divine Institution*, as is most evident, both from the Books of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, where continual Mention is made of the *High Priest*, the *Priests* and the *Levites*: From the Writings of the *New Testament*, where the same *Hierarchy* is likewise maintained and continued, both by our blessed SAVIOUR and his *Apostles*: And from the universal, unanimous and uninterrupted Testimony and Practice of the whole *Church* of CHRIST, in the Days of *Miracles*, and for the first fifteen Hundred Years of the *Gospel*: Which sundry eminent *Divines* of the *Church* of *England* have, in their Writings, set in a most clear Light; particularly the learned Dr. *Brett*, in his two late excellent Books; the one upon *Church-Government* and *Governors*, &c. the other upon the *Divine Right* of *Episcopacy*.

Episcopal Government, I say, as it was of old the *Government* of the *Jewish Church*, and hath been ever, from the Beginning, the only *Government* that obtained in the *universal Church* of CHRIST; so was it also the *Government* of this particular *Church* of *Scotland*

land (as the accurate Mr. *Sage*, in his second *Letter* for a *Toleration*, hath fairly proved) which was established by our *Reformers*; and which, from the *Reformation*, did obtain, and continued in Vigour, unresisted, and unanimously submitted unto, until the Year 1575.

At which Time indeed, your proud and turbulent *Predecessors*, because some of them were not advanced to the chiefest *Offices* in the *Church*; and as being wearied of, or rather envying that most desirable *Christian Concord* and *Union* which then flourished, and was so remarkable amongst all the *Members* of it; and which is very deservedly applauded and commended by Bishop (a) *Spottiswood*, and your own Mr. (b) *Petrie*, two of the *Historians* of those Times: Your most unsociable *Predecessors*, I say, did then first begin to disturb the amiable *Peace* and *Quiet*, both of this *Church* and *Kingdom*, and to create great *Schisms* and *Divisions* in them.

And no small Work and Labour indeed hath it since cost your *Party*, with many Ups and Downs, Ebbings and Flowings for upwards of an Hundred Years Space; through many *Rebellions*, *Massacres* and *Christian Bloodshed*, to the very great Disturbance, and almost irreparable Ruin of this ancient *Nation*, before

(a) See *Spottiswood's Hist.* Pag. 258. (b) See *Petrie's Hist.* Tom. 2. Pag. 352.

fore they got the *Church* reduced to that low and miserable Estate she now lies in. Where also, 'tis very observable, that ever since the *Reformation*, the Interest of this *National Church*, and that of the *Royal Family* have still been inseparably link'd together, and have always both stood and fallen at once.

For not only the Blood and horrid Murder of the *Royal Martyr King Charles I.* and of many brave loyal *Heroes*, who sacrificed their Lives in Vindication and Defence of the ancient Government of this *Church* and *Kingdom*; and also all the Christian Blood spilt in *Britain*, during all that Space of Time, in the Field of Battle and by other hostile Violence: But likewise all that was then also shed by the *Hand of Justice*, for suppressing these *rebellious* and *schismatical Inturrections*, which, with very much *Noise*, is still by many of you most indiscreetly complain'd of.

All this great Deluge of Blood, I say, is most justly chargeable (and sad and weighty is the Charge indeed) upon the aspiring Pride, the turbulent Disposition, and ungovernable Zeal of the *Ring-Leaders* of your Party; and on those deceitful *Wolves in Sheeps Clothing*, the *Roman Emissaries*, and other seditious Spirits that were then let loose in *Britain*, not to (a) spare, as the Apostle adviseth,

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(a) *Acts* 20. 29.

and to *feed* the *Flock* with the most useful and necessary Doctrines of the *Gospel* of *Peace* : But to drain their *Purses*, and to poison and undo their immortal Souls with the damnable Sins of **Schism** and **Rebellion**, by persuading them not only to (a) *despise Dominion*, and to *speak evil of Dignities*, Crimes most severely reprehended by *St. Jude* ; but boldly to fly in *Arms* against, and (as was in part just now observed) most execrably to murder the *LORD'S Anointed*, their rightful *Superior* both in *Church* and *State*.

And so wofully successful were they in those Days, in their most cruel Endeavours this Way, that (to the exceeding Regrate of many serious good Christians) they did miserably impose upon, and cheat vast Numbers of well-meaning, tho' mis-led Persons, of all Ranks, both out of their *Lives* and their *Estates* ; and have left such a deep Tincture of these horrid Sins, yet running in the *Blood* of their *Posterity*, that nothing less than the deepest Humility, and most sincere Repentance, accompanied and assisted by the *Grace* of *God*, will ever be able to cleanse and purge away.

But give me leave, Sir, to tell you, that however deplorable and low, by these Means, the present Condition of this *Church* now is ;
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(a) *Jude* v. 8.

and tho' her *Priests* by many, as the *Apostles* were of old, are now accounted *Fools*, and slighted and despised as the very (a) *Mire* in the *Streets* : Yet the same *Almighty Power* that restored to Life again the (b) *dead* and *dry Bones* ; I say, our *Great, Almighty* and most *Merciful God*, will, I firmly hope, in his own good Time, again restore to his *distress* and *ruined Church* in this *Land* (together with the true *Spirit* and *Life* of Religion) the free, open and publick Profession and Exercise of her *Ancient* and *Apostolick Faith*, *Worship* and *Government* ; and cause her sincere and dutiful *Children* rejoice and flourish, according to the Days wherein they have *seen Adversity*.

As also, Sir, let me tell you, it is neither the Countenance of the *present Civil Government*, nor the great Numbers that by Reason of your *present Prosperity* are now ignorantly misled, and most unhappily engaged into the *Schism* ; nor yet the Practice (founded, by their own Confession, upon a pretended *Necessity*) of some few *reform'd Churches* beyond Sea, that will ever amend the Matter, or in the least justify you in the Eyes of *God Almighty*, who judgeth not as Man judgeth. And that because *Truth* is still *Truth*, whether adhered to by few or by many ; or

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(a) 1. Cor. 4. 13. (b) Ezek. 37. 1, 2, &c.

tho', if it were possible, even deserted by all.

The *Romanists* I know, you will tell me, do with as great Confidence (but, I must say, with the greatest Injustice in the World) charge the same Guilt of **Schism**, yea and that of **Heresy** also upon the whole Church of *Scotland*, and upon all Sorts of the *Reform'd*; and that I should therefore, in the first Place, clear my self, and those of the *Communion* I adhere to, from that horrid Imputation, before I did, with so much Forwardness, charge the same Guilt upon you.

Sir, that the *Romanists* do call all Sorts of Christians that differ from them, **Hereticks** and **Schismaticks**, is most true. To whom, not in the least inclining at present to meddle with that Controversy, I take upon me to give only this short, and, as I humbly conceive, most reasonable Answer.

That when those of the *Romish Communion* shall fairly, fully and evidently demonstrate, that they have made no corrupt and unwarrantable *Additions* nor *Innovations*, neither in the *Government*, in the *Faith*, nor in the *Worship* of the Church (which are three great *Essentials* in the Christian Religion) from what they were in the *first* and purest Ages of the *Gospel*: But, on the contrary, have faithfully preserved the same *intire*, *untainted* and *uncorrupted*; when this, I say,

say, they shall *sufficiently* prove, or direct where the same is already *plainly, fairly* and *unexceptionably* done, the best *Reform'd* must then (but not till then) most justly submit to the Charge.

However, Sir, with no corrupt and unwarrantable *Additions* nor *Innovations* can you, with any just Reason, charge the present *suffering Church of Scotland*, because both her *Faith*, her *Worship* and *Government* (as the above-cited Mr. *Sage*, Mr. *Calder*, Mr. *Barclay* and others have judiciously proved) are pure, primitive and *Apostolick*: And therefore, you having no just Ground for deserting her *Communion*, the horrid Guilt of *Schism*, as already I think I have sufficiently made appear, lies heavily at your Door.

Sir, I am well apprised, you will not miss here to upbraid me with a late Design, unadvisedly forwarded (did it become a *Lay-man* to say it) by some of the *Clergy*, of introducing into the Church a few *ancient*, but now of a long Time *obsolete Usages*, contain'd in a small *Treatise*, call'd *A Communion-Office, &c.* taken partly from primitive *Liturgies, &c.* printed at *London* in the Year 1718, such as *mixing the Wine* with Water in the Sacramental Cup, anointing the *Sick* with *Oyl, &c.*

Sir, I shall not wait at present, neither will I take upon me to consider with you, how far

that Project was out of the Way : Only I shall tell you, that the *worthy Biskop of Edinburgh*, with the other reverend *Fathers* of the Church, and some of the most learned and judicious of the *Presbyters*, did, in the Month of *March* 1723, meet at *Edinburgh*, on purpose to consider and determine about that Affair.

At which *Meeting*, the said reverend *Bishops*, after having duly advised and deliberate thereupon, did unanimously and expressly discharge all Kind of *Innovations*, or *Renovations* whatsoever, to be introduced into the *Church*, unless that in the first Place, by a just and competent *Authority*, the same be duly and regularly examined, found agreeable to the *Sacred Text*, and established.

And in their great Wisdom, they have composed a *Formula* for that very Purpose, which the whole *Clergy*, under the Penalties then also enacted, are all bound to subscribe. Unto which those very Persons who gave first Occasion to it, excepting one or two *disobedient Members*, have now most readily subjected themselves. So that this Affair, with however strange an Aspect it did at first appear, can henceforth give no further just Ground of Umbrage unto any.

Here, in the mean Time, I cannot but with much Satisfaction observe, what a great Advantage and Benefit redounds to the *Church*
from

from the *Episcopal Authority*. For 'twas but a very short Time, after the *College of Bishops* came to a full and perfect Understanding of the Endeavours and Diligence of some of the *Brethren* in the present Affair, when, by their great Prudence, and a due Exercise of their *Episcopal Power*, they did effectually prevent, and put a full Stop to all further Progress of it.

While, at the same Time, 'tis lamentable to observe, what great irreconcilable *Divisions* and *Animosities* have, these several Years bypast, been amongst your *Teachers*, concerning a Number of (I may freely say, for the most Part useless and impertinent) *Articles*, imposed by * some of your *Presbyteries* upon their *Probationers*, to be by them believed

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* There was, about 12 or 15 Years ago, a young Man of the Surname of *Craig*, who, after he had for a considerable Time said Prayers in one or two Gentlemens Families in *Strathearn*, did at length pass his Trials before the Presbyterian Presbytery of *Ochterarder*, in order to have been admitted into Ministerial Communion with them. But this Privilege they would by no means confer upon him, because he refused, together with their *Westminster* Confession of Faith, to subscribe and own these following Articles also, as Articles of his Faith. 1. They required him to believe and subscribe, That there are more damned than saved. 2. That the Damned continue to sin in Hell. 3. That *all* the Children of Christian Parents receiving Baptism, and dying before they commit actual Sin, are not saved. 4. That it is against sound Doctrine, and orthodox Divinity, to teach, That Men ought to forsake Sin in order to turn unto Christ. I am credibly inform'd, that there were other eight Articles of this Sort, proposed to the said Mr. *Craig*, which are now suppress'd. All which do commonly bear this Designation, *The Ochterarder Creed*.

and owned as Articles of the Christian Faith: Without the Belief and Subscription whereof, no *Clerical* Communion with them is allowed. Which most however of your Presbyterian Preachers, I am perswaded, do heartily wish had never been proposed. Which *Animosities*, that upon these and the like Accounts are often arising among you, for Want of this *Episcopal Authority*, it is not within the Compass of all your Wit and Skill effectually to remove and compose.

But now, Sir, because you may perhaps still apprehend, that all I have hitherto said, is only alledging, and not proving what was principally under Debate; I shall yet therefore clearly, and withal as shortly as possible, make it evident, over and above what fair and reasonable Hints have been already offered, That as in the *Jewish Church*, GOD Almighty himself appointed three *Orders of Clergymen*, the *High Priest*, the *Priests* and the *Levites*; so, in the *Christian Church*, the Holy JESUS, and his *Apostles*, did institute and appoint *three distinct Orders of Ministers*, to continue to the End of the World,

Unto the *first* of which only, and to their rightful *Successors* (who, during the *first Age* of the Church, were stiled *Apostles*, and sometimes *Angels*; but always since, *Bishops*) our blessed LORD committed the holy *Apo-*
stolick

Episcopal Powers of Ordination, Confirmation and Jurisdiction.

And this, Sir, because I cannot pretend to perform it to better Purpose, I shall do, by giving you an Abstract, of what that judicious and learned *Ritualist* Mr. *Wheatly*, in his *Church of England Man's Companion*, and sundry other learned Authors, have with great Ingenuity written upon this Subject.

For which End, I must in the *First Place* tell you, That, by the *Ministers of Religion*, we are to understand those, who (a) *being taken from among Men, are ordained for Men in Things pertaining to GOD. An Honour which no Man taketh to himself, but he that is called thereto of GOD, as was Aaron.*

The *Ministers of Religion*, are the *Ambassadors of JESUS CHRIST*, the *Representatives of GOD Almighty*: By Him appointed to publish his *Laws*, to pass His *Pardons*, and to preside in his *Worship*. GOD has committed to them the *Keys of His Kingdom*. (b) *Whosoever Sins therefore they duly remit, they shall be remitted; and whosoever Sins they retain, they shall be retained.* In short, they are the *Stewards of the Mysteries of GOD*, and the *Dispensers of his holy Word and Sacraments.*

All

(a) *Heb. 5. 1. 2.* (b) *Jo. 20. 23.*

All these Characters and Powers, are in Scripture ascribed to the Ministerial Office. For which Reason, it is of so high a Nature, that nothing less than a *Divine Commission*, either mediately or immediately, can qualify any Person for it.

Among the *Jews*, none could approach the Presence of G O D, but such as were particularly appointed by him. (a) *Aaron* and his *Sons*, and the *Levites*, were consecrated by the express Command of G O D to *Moses*. (b) And no less than Death, was the Penalty of invading their *Office*. G O D has vindicated the Honour of the *Priesthood*, at the Expence of several Miracles.

(c) *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, though *Levites*, were, for invading the *Priest's Office*, swallowed up alive, both themselves and their Associates. (d) *Uzzah* was struck dead on the Spot, for touching the *Ark*, though he only did it, out of Zeal to hinder it from falling. King (e) *Saul*, for offering Sacrifice upon an imaginary Necessity, lost his Kingdom; and King (f) *Uzziah*, for attempting to burn *Incense*, was immediately smitten with *Leprosy*, of which he never recovered.

Yea,

(a) *Levit.* 8. and *Numb.* 3. 5. (b) *Numb.* 3. 10. and 18. 7.
(c) *Numb.* 16. (d) 2 *Sam.* 6. 6, 7. (e) 1. *Sam.* 13. (f) 2 *Chron.* 26. 26, &c.

Yea, our Blessed LORD himself, though he wanted no Gift, to qualify Him for the *Ministry of Reconciliation*; and though the Necessities of Mankind call'd loudly for his Instructions, yet did He by no Means take upon Him this Office, 'till about the Thirtieth Year of His Age, he was externally commissioned thereunto by the HOLY GHOST; and that an (a) audible Voice from Heaven proclaim'd Him to be the MESSIAH.

And of His *Followers* it is observable, that they presumed neither to preach nor to baptize, nor to perform any other sacred Office, until they were particularly commissioned by Him for that End. (b) *He first ordained Twelve, that they might be with him; and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have Power to heal Sicknesses, and to cast out Devils.* (c) *And afterwards, He appointed other Seventy also.*

Again, in the *Second Place*, It is not to be doubted, but our blessed LORD and His *Apostles*, and the primitive *Church*, who heartily desired the Conversion of the *Jews*, did for that very Reason, retain as many of the *Jewish* Usages and Customs, as were consistent with Christian Liberty.

Thus

(a) *Luke* 3. 22. (b) *Mark* 3. 14, 15. (c) *Luke* 10. 1.

Thus, the Two *Christian Sacraments*, *Baptism* and the *LORD's Supper*, were taken from the *Jewish Baptisms*, and from their *Postcæniums* or After-suppers, which they usually kept after the *Passover*. *Christian Ordination* of *Clergymen* by Imposition of Hands, is deriv'd from the *Jews Ordination* in the *Synagogue*. Our Way of *Excommunication* is expressly taken from Theirs. Our (a) *Cathedral Churches* answer to their *Temple* at *Jerusalem*. Our *Parish-churches* to their *Synagogues*. And our *churching* of *Women*, to their *Purifications*. And so likewise, without all Peradventure, are the *Three several Orders* of our *Clergy* deriv'd from Theirs.

Agreeably whereunto, by an immediate Commission from G O D the Father, the H O L Y J E S U S, whilst he lived here on Earth, was himself the great *High Priest*, and first *Bishop* of the *Christian Church*: Having been endued from Above, with a full and superlative *Authority* and *Power*, to *instruct*, to *plant*, and to *govern* the same. Design'd by *St. Peter*, The great (b) *Shepherd* and *Bishop* of our *Souls*; and by the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, (c) *A great High Priest* called

(a) i. e. These Churches whereat our Bishops were wont more especially and principally to reside, such as the Church of *St Andrews*, the Church of *Elgin*, &c. (b) 1 *Pet.* 2. 25. (c) *Heb.* 4. 14. and 5. 10.

led of GOD. The *Twelve Apostles* were then only his *Presbyters*, and the *seventy Disciples*, His *Ministers* or *Deacons*.

For that the *Twelve* were even then of an Order, superior to that of the *Seventy*, is most evident in Fact, not only from their being *call'd* and *ordain'd* first; from their more close and constant Attendance upon our SAVIOUR'S Person; from their bearing the special Names, together with the Number and Designation of *Apostles*; from our SAVIOUR'S more particular Care, Solitude and Intercession for these *Twelve*; and his diligent instructing and teaching them more than the rest of His *Followers*; and revealing to them the *Mysteries* of the Kingdom of Heaven: But from hence also, that the *Successors* of the *Apostles* were chosen out of the *Seventy*, (a) *Matthias* one of that Number being *ordained* in the Place of *Judas*.

If it shall be alledged, That *Matthias* was not one of the *seventy Disciples*; and notwithstanding what is here said, that the *Seventy* were of an Order equal to the *Apostles*: Then, what Need was there I beseech you, for a new Election, by such a solemn Appeal to Almighty GOD? Such an Election certainly, upon Supposition that the *Seventy* were upon a *Level* with the *Apostles*, had been

(a) *Acts* 1. 26.

been altogether superfluous, because one of the *Seventy* could have as well serv'd the Turn. But the Case, as 'tis evident from the *Apostles* Practice, being unquestionably otherwise; it is hence clear to a Demonstration, that in our SAVIOUR'S Days, there were *Three Degrees of Clergymen* in the *Christian Church*, as before there had been in the *Jewish*.

Moreover, Sir, that there were these *three* distinct *Orders* or *Degrees* of *Ministers* in the *Church*, in the *Apostles* Days, which were design'd to continue to the End of the World, is plain to any one who will read the *Scriptures* without Prejudice: For, besides these *two* which your Party allow, *viz. Deacons*, and those sometimes call'd *Presbyters* or *Elders* in *Scripture*, and sometimes, *Bishops*; we read there also of another *Order*, which was superior to, and had Authority over both these.

Such were, besides the *twelve Apostles*, whom our blessed LORD had himself, before his Ascension, advanced to the highest Dignity in the *Church*, as is clear from the fore-cited 20th of *St. John*, Ver. 21. and from *St. Luke* 22. 29. where he saith, *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me*; and which by and by shall further yet be made manifest. Such were;

were, I say, first, besides these twelve Apostles, St. *Paul* and *Barnabas*; who (*Acts* 13. 2, 3.) by the special Designation of the HOLY GHOST, together with the Ministry of Prayer, and Fasting, and Laying on of *Hands*, were by the Church appointed *Apostles*, and Ambassadors of JESUS CHRIST: Whom also we find (*Acts* 14. 23.) performing the first Apostolical Ordination of Presbyters, that we read of in the *New Testament*.

Such were likewise *Timothy* and *Titus*: For 'tis clear from the Epistles St. *Paul* wrote to them, that they had Power to ordain *Presbyters*, to enforce them to their Duty, to receive Accusations against them, and judicially to pass Sentence upon them: Which clearly proves their Superiority over them.

Such was also *Epaphroditus*; and such, no doubt, were those whom St. *Paul* calls *Apostles of the Churches*, and joins with *Titus*, II. *Cor.* 8. 23. And such were certainly those *Angels* of the Churches, mentioned in the first three Chapters of the *Revelation*.

I know, Sir, it is alledged, that most of these were extraordinary *Officers*; and so of temporary Institution only: But this is said without any just Ground. That they were sometimes sent upon extraordinary Messages, and had a Power, upon Occasion, to do extraordinary Things, is very true; But then the

the same is also to be said of *Presbyters* and *Deacons*. *Philip* was only a *Deacon*, and yet God employed him in several extraordinary Matters : And working of Miracles was so common in the Beginning of Christianity, being then so very necessary for establishing and confirming the Truth of the Christian Religion, that ordinary Christians were frequently endued with that Power. So that if this were an Argument for the temporary Institution of *one Order*, it must be the same for all the rest ; but thus it proving too much, must for that very Reason be allowed to prove nothing at all.

Again they urge, That *Timothy* was an *Evangelist*, because St. *Paul* bids him (*2 Tim. 4. 5.*) *do the Work of an Evangelist*. To which 'tis answer'd, That an *Evangelist* was no distinct Officer at any Time in the Church : For the proper Notion of an *Evangelist*, in the *Acts*, and in St. *Paul's* Epistles, is, one who was eminently qualified to preach the Gospel, and had taken great Pains therein.

Thus *Philip* was called an *Evangelist* (*Acts 21. 8.*) who was no more than a *Deacon*, and could only preach and baptize ; and had not the Power of *laying on of Hands*, which *Timothy* had, as is clear from the 8th Chapter of the *Acts* ; where, after *Philip* had converted and baptized the Men of *Samarita*, the
Apostles

Apostles themselves were obliged to come and lay their Hands on them, that they might receive the HOLY GHOST. And therefore the Office of *Philip*, was certainly far inferior to that of *Timothy*.

Whence 'tis evident, That allowing *Timothy* to be an Evangelist, yet his Power over Presbyters did not accrue to him upon that Account: Nor does *Timothy's* being an Evangelist, prove the Office of *Ordaining* and *Ruling Presbyters*, to be peculiar to an Evangelist, any more than *Philip's* being called an Evangelist, proves the Office of Preaching and Baptizing to be so.

From what is said therefore it plainly appears, that there were *Three* distinct Orders or Degrees of Ministers in the Christian Church, both in our SAVIOUR'S Days, and in the Days of his Apostles.

Our next Enquiry is, To how many, or to which of these, the Holy Apostolick Powers of *Ordination*, *Confirmation*, and *Jurisdiction* were committed.

That the lowest Order, that of *Deacons*, had not these Powers, is by all confess'd: But, that the Apostles by *Divine* Institution were endued with the same, as also with a Privilege of devolving them upon others, is most unquestionable. Because as our blessed

SAVIOUR (a) glorified not himself to be an High Priest, but had his Commission from GOD the Father ; so, after His Resurrection, He invested His Apostles with the very same Authority and Commission, which His Heavenly Father had given unto Him ; in so far, as it related to the instructing, and planting, and governing his Church.

For saith He not expressly (Jo. 20. 21, 22.) *As my Father sent me, even so send I you. And he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the HOLY GHOST.* In which Commission is plainly contain'd, the Apostles Authority of Ordaining and Ruling others, and a Power to transfer that Commission upon Others, and Those upon Others, to the End of the World. For, to shew that it was not meorly personal to the Apostles, our SAVIOUR promises to be with them, and with their Successors, in the Execution of this Commission, (b) *always, even unto the End of the World.*

In Pursuance of which Commission, the Apostles ordain'd Bishops in all Churches. For that the above-named Powers, were actually and really devolv'd by the Apostles, upon Timothy, Titus, and other such fit Persons, as the Occasions of the Church required, is most evident from many Texts in the

(a) Heb. 5. 5. (b) Mat. 28. 20.

the *New Testament*, and particularly from what hath been before observed.

The only Question then is, Whether the *second Order*, that of *Presbyters*, was ever invested with these holy Powers? The Affirmative whereof can never be prov'd from *Scripture*, nor from *Antiquity*.

For *First*, 'Tis frivolous to argue from the Community of Names, to a Community and Sameness of Office: Or to pretend, because these Words *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are very often, in the *New Testament*, promiscuously and indifferently used, to signify the same Office; and because meer *Presbyters* are frequently there call'd *Bishops*, that therefore all the *Powers*, which belong to those whom we now call *Bishops*, were ever lodged in these *Presbyters*.

For, did this Argument still hold, it would reduce the whole Office-bearers of the Church, and bring them all upon a Level; which neither Party, I am very sure, will admit.

For, may we not easily observe, that our blessed LORD himself, (1 Pet. 2. 25.) is called *The Bishop of our Souls*? That (Heb. 3. 1.) He is called our *Apostle* and *High Priest*? And that (Rom. 15. 8.) He is called *Minister* or *Deacon*? Again, may we not likewise observe, that the Apostles (1 Pet.

5. 1. 2. *Jo. v. 1.* and 3 *Jo. v. 1.*) are called *Presbyters* or *Elders*? That (2 *Cor. 5. 20.*) they are called *Ambassadors*? And that (1 *Cor. 3. 5.* 2 *Cor. 3. 6.* and *Ch. 6. v. 4.*) they are also call'd *Ministers* or *Deacons*?

Now, will any wise Man, Sir, I beseech you, for these Reasons, confound all those Offices? And say, That an Apostle is upon the Level with our *Great High Priest*; or that either a *Presbyter*, or a *Deacon*, is equal to an Apostle. No certainly, by no Means.

Is it not moreover observable, that the superior Order includes always the inferior? For, a *Deacon* when made a *Presbyter*, ceaseth not to be a *Deacon* still. Neither doth a *Presbyter*, when made a *Bishop*, cease to be a *Presbyter* still.

In like Manner, as a *Captain* of a Troop, or a *General* of an Army, may be call'd a *Soldier*; yet every *Soldier* is not therefore a *Captain*, much less a *General*: So, in the same Manner, every *Bishop* is a *Presbyter*, and every *Presbyter* is a *Deacon*. But every *Presbyter*, is not for that Reason, a *Bishop*, neither is every *Deacon* a *Presbyter*.

The only Method then to prove, that the Power of *Ordination*, &c. belongs to *Presbyters*, is, to shew, that whoever were in
Scripture

Scripture call'd by the Name of Presbyter or Bishop, were invested with those Powers: Which is a Thing can never be done.

For if Presbyters or Elders had the Power of *Ordination* lodged in them; for what Reasons can we suppose, that St. *Paul* should have left *Titus* in *Crete*, on Purpose to (a) *Ordain Elders in every City*, when 'tis well known, that that Island had been converted to Christianity, long before *Titus* came thither; and therefore doubtless, had many Presbyters among them, to preach and to administer the Sacraments.

Or, why did the same Apostle leave *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, with a like Commission, in these Words, (b) *I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other Doctrine.* (c) *Against an Elder (or Presbyter) receive not an Accusation, but before Two or Three Witnesses.* (d) *Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, &c.* since it is also certain, that there were many Elders in that Church, before *Timothy* was left there.

Nor Secondly, Can this be prov'd from that often cited Passage, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. where St. *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* not to neglect the Gift that was in him, which was given him by

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(a) *Tit.* 1. 5. (b) 1 *Tim.* 1. 3. (c) 1 *Tim.* 5. 19. (d) 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

by Prophecy, with the laying on of the Hands of the Presbytery. For, allowing that *Timothy's Ordination* is really here spoken of, which yet many learned Men have very reasonably questioned, it is manifest, as was above observ'd, that the *Apostles* themselves, were often call'd in Scripture by the Name of Presbyters; and consequently, the Presbyters here mentioned, may very probably be the *Apostles*.

We are very sure, that *St. Paul* himself was one of them, and that he ascribes the whole of *Timothy's Ordination*, to his own *Laying on of Hands*, (*2 Tim. i. 6.*) and therefore, the outmost that can be deduced from this above-cited Text, is, that one or more of such as were meer Presbyters, might lay on their Hands, in Concurrence with *St. Paul*, to testify their Approbation and Consent. As is the Custom at this Day, in the *Ordination* of a Presbyter, and has been sometimes done at the (a) *Ordination* of a *Bishop*.

Nor *Thirdly*, Can it be inferr'd, from any of the Charges or Directions, given by *St. Paul* in his Epistles, either to Bishops or Presbyters, that they had ever any Thing like the Power of *Ordination* committed to them: Which makes it more than probable, that where-

(a) Vide Bevereg in Can. Apost. l. Pag. 11. ad finem Col. 2.

wherever the Word *Bishop* is found in Scripture, as applied to an Ecclesiastick Officer after our SAVIOUR, the middle Order is always meant.

For, though the Apostles are sometimes in Scripture called Presbyters and Deacons, yet are they never called Bishops in the new Testament. Their Office is once indeed called *Επίσκοπή*, that is *Bishoprick*; but wherever we meet with *Επίσκοποι*, that is *Bishops*, either in the *Acts* or in the *Epistles*, we may very well understand the middle Order, which we now call Presbyters.

As for those whom we now call *Bishops*, they were in the first Age of the Church (as being the special *Ambassadors* of JESUS CHRIST) stiled *Apostles*. For so St. Paul speaking to the *Philippians* concerning *Epaphroditus* (*Phil. 2. 25.*) calls him his *Brother and Companion in Labour*, ὑμῶν δὲ Ἀπόστολον, but your *Apostle*. For thus the *Greek Word*, by an Emphasis, ought in this Place to be rendred, and not *Messenger*, as in our Translation: An Office, which 'tis probable St. Paul ordained him to, when he sent them with this *Epistle*. For which Reason, he charges them to receive him with all Gladness, and to hold such in Reputation: And Epaphroditus is accordingly by all Antiquity, reckon'd to be the first Bishop of Philippi.

Now, Sir, the Apostolick Office, as from the above-cited Text (*Matth. 28. 20.*) is most evident, being not temporary, but design'd to continue in the Christian Church; the Apostles took Care to *ordain* proper Persons, to succeed them in that high and weighty Charge, who, as was just now observ'd, were at first also call'd *Apostles*: Though afterwards, in Modesty, declining so high a Title, and leaving it to the *Twelve*, first and strictly so call'd, they contented themselves with the Title of *Bishop*, which has continued with the highest Order of the *Clergy* ever since.

So that, granting meer Presbyters to be Scripture-bishops, which your Party have so earnestly contended for; yet nothing can from thence be inferr'd to prove, their having equal Power with those whom we now call *Bishops*, who, as is clear from what is said, are the *Successors* of a higher Order.

For further Proof, I might add, as was above observ'd, the joint Testimony of all *Christians*, for near fifteen hundred Years together, and challenge your Party to produce one single Instance of a valid *Ordination*, perform'd by Presbyters without a *Bishop*, in all that Time. And it being so, it appears to me one of the strangest Things in the World, to see People now, at this Time of the Day, pretending to it.

In short, Sir, we have as sufficient Ground to believe, that these holy *Apostolick Powers of Ordination, Confirmation and Jurisdiction*, were appropriated, and made peculiar to those, whom we now call *Bishops*, and to their *Predecessors* in Office, as that sundry of the *Gospels and Epistles are canonical Scripture*. And consequently, none but such as are *ordain'd by Bishops*, have any just Right or Title, to minister in the Church of CHRIST.

To all that is here said for the *Divine Right of Episcopacy*, one notable Plea is, That the *Clergy* can prove their *Succession*, down from JESUS CHRIST and his Apostles, to this very Day. A Thing which your Teachers dare not pretend to.

The *Jewish Priests* of old, were all oblig'd to do this: For, the Effect of all their *Ministrations* depended upon it; which, if they could not do, they were forthwith degraded from their Office, as from *Ezra 2. 62.* is most clear, *They sought their Register (saith the Prophet there) among those that were reckoned by Genealogy, but they were not found; therefore were they, as polluted, thrust from the Priesthood.* A dreadful Sentence surely, to an *usurping Ministry*, could they once be brought the Length, duly to consider it.

Sir,

Sir, As a farther Evidence, of this Superiority and Subordination, which I do here plead for, let us view the Church under any of those Similitudes, by which it is usually represented in Scripture, and we shall find, That they all combine to describe it, as an orderly well regulated *Society*, under the Government of *superior* and *subordinate Officers*.

And *First*, Take you it under the Figure of a *natural human Body*, as it is most *lively* represented in the 12th Chap. of St. Paul's First Epistle to the *Corinthians*, where, from the 12th *ver.* downward, you will find, there can be nothing more directly opposite, to your late and new levelling Schemes of *Parity*, amongst the Office-bearers of the Church (which are the certain Result of nothing, but Pride and Covetousness) than the Description of the Church there given by the Apostle.

Read, Sir, from the 15th to the 19th *ver.* *If the Foot shall say, Because I am not the Hand, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? And if the Ear shall say, Because I am not the Eye, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? If the whole Body were an Eye, where were the Hearing? Or, if the whole were Hearing, where were the Smelling? But*
now

now hath GOD set the Members, everyone of them in the Body, as it hath pleased Him.

Again, read the 28th ver. where St. Paul tells us, GOD hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that Miracles, &c. And in the 4th Chap. of his Epistle to the Eph. 11 and 12 ver. he saith, CHRIST gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of CHRIST. And in the 29th ver. of the forecited 12th Chap. of his Epistle to the Corinthians, the same St. Paul asks (a Question, one would think, very needful to be proposed in these our Days) Are all, saith he, Apostles ? Are all Prophets ? Are all Teachers ? Are all Workers of Miracles ? &c.

Here, Sir, we may fairly observe, That St. Paul did unquestionably, of Purpose set himself, to beat down that proud and insulting Equality, which with so much Forwardness and Fondness, is most unjustly grasped after by your Presbyterian Preachers.

Again, Let us consider the Church as a Building ; and such it is call'd, 1 Pet. 2. 5. and Eph. 2. 20. A spiritual House, built upon

upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST himself being the chief Corner-stone. And ver. 21st, Christians are compared to a *Building fitly framed, growing unto an holy Temple in the LORD.*

Now, Sir, tell me I beseech you, can a Heap of unpolish'd, uncemented Stones, and other necessary Materials, without a wise *Master-builder*, together with the Hands of other skilful Workmen, of different *Stations* and *Callings*, compose a *Building* thus *fitly framed*? The Application is most easy.

Again, Sir, let us look upon the Body of Christians, as the *Members* of a large *Household* or *Family*. In that you know, there must be *Stewards* and other governing Servants, of different *Stations* and *Degrees*, for preserving of a good Oeconomy and good Order therein.

Once more, Consider the Body of Christians as *Soldiers*, fighting under CHRIST JESUS his *Banner*, and there, you will see an absolute Necessity for *general* and *subaltern Officers*. In short, Sir, the Parallel holds, and will still be the same, if you view the Church under any other Similitude whatsoever: For we are by no Means to look upon CHRIST'S Church as a *Babel*, or a Realm of Confusion. Nor are we to apprehend, that CHRIST neglected the Establishment of any Means,

Means, that was proper and necessary for preventing the same. Which yet he had done, had He, as some Men wickedly imagine, appointed no certain Form of Government in the *Church*, but had left it to the Discretion of Men, to chose what Form they pleased.

Which, according to Mens various Humors and Opinions, would certainly have differ'd, in the different Places and Kingdoms of the World : And so, the *Unity* of the *One Catholick Church* of CHRIST, which in Part consists (as was before observ'd) in being govern'd by the same *Hierarchy* and Laws, would by this Means have certainly been destroyed ; which is a Thing upon no Account can be admitted.

To conclude then, and to sum up all that is here said upon this Head, we have, *first*, in the *Old Testament*, for establishing and confirming the *Divine Right* of *Episcopacy*, the ancient and unquestionable Government of the *Jewish Church*, by the *High Priest*, the *Priests* and the *Levites*, of GOD Almighty his own immediate Appointment ; which is an unexceptionable Evidence.

We also have in the *Second Place*, our blessed SAVIOUR'S Authority, with his Example and Practice, whilst here upon Earth ; together with the Authority and Practice of His holy Apostles and Disciples, all clearly revealed

revealed to us, as hath been above observed, in the New Testament.

And *Lastly*, We have the *uninterrupted, universal, and consentient Testimony and Practice* of the whole *Catholick Church*, for near fifteen hundred Years together, fairly transmitted, and handed down to us, by most credible *authentick History*, and *universal Tradition*. All which put together, is as much as may reasonably suffice, to establish the undoubted Truth and Certainty of any Matter of Fact whatsoever.

Whilst on the other Hand, you have nothing in the World, to support your new and late *Schemes of Presbytery and Parity* (setting aside the *present legal Establishment*, which, for very good Reasons, ye are certainly mighty proud of) but the mangled and perverted Sense of a few Texts and Sentences of sacred Scripture and primitive Authors, most wickedly contrived and invented, by some proud *Diotrepheses* of your own *Sett*, for that very End and Purpose. Which in this Place, had it not been for studied Brevity, I should certainly have given you a full and particular Account of, and shall, God willing, by the next, if required.

Again, Sir, for your further Satisfaction, and because this *Answer* to your *Letter*, might in so far be judged *defective*, did it not
contain

contain a just and *clear Description* of the *Church*, the deserting the *Communion* whereof, I have above maintained to be so horrid a Crime; I give it you therefore briefly here, in the Words of a learned Doctor, as follows.

“ By the *Church* then is meant, the *Body*
 “ or *Society* of Men, that are regularly united
 “ under JESUS CHRIST their *Head*, and
 “ their *Bishops*, and other Pastors lawfully
 “ constituted under CHRIST, professing the
 “ true Christian Faith, and performing the
 “ true Christian Worship: Holding all Things
 “ that are necessary to *Salvation*; and hold-
 “ ing nothing as necessary to *Salvation*, but
 “ what really is so. That is, what is clearly
 “ contain’d in the *written Word* of GOD, or
 “ is fairly deducible therefrom, and agreeable
 “ therewith.”

And such a One, blessed be GOD, is the present suffering Church of *Scotland*, whereof I own my self to be a sincere, though an unworthy Member. A *Church*, where the *Truth*, and nothing but the *Truth*, is made the Object of our *Faith*: Where GOD, the true GOD, and only the true GOD, is made the Object of our Worship: And is decently worshipped, with excellent unexceptionable Prayers, and regular uncorrupted Sacraments.

Our

Our Worship is primitive and pure; and our Doctrines, whether our Enemies will own it or not, are all *Apostolical*. And therefore, whosoever divides himself from such a Church, wherethe pure Word of God is orthodoxly taught, and devout Prayers to God are duly made, and God's holy Sacraments are regularly administred: That Man, I say, effectually cuts himself off from the Body, and so deprives himself of that spiritual Nourishment, which by these holy Offices should be conveyed to him.

For, all God's Promises of *Grace* and *Salvation*, are made in general only to the *Body* of CHRIST; and in particular, to those only that are in Communion with it. And therefore, whosoever forsakes the Communion, does in Effect renounce the Promise.

The whole *Stream* and *Current* of God's *ordinary* and *covenanted* Mercy, as was before observ'd, runs in the *Channel* of his Church. There we may drink of *living Waters*, and be satisfied. But 'tis ill trusting to *extraordinary Showers*, and *By-streams* and to *broken Cisterns that can hold no Water*.

Sir, I come now in the *Last* Place to tell you. That besides that your Party, by such *Schismatical* Practices as are above-named, have most wilfully and causelessly thrown off
that

that just Obedience and Respect which they owe to our *spiritual Fathers*, the *Bishops* and *Governors* of the *Church*, as did wickedly *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, in the Days of *Moses*; and thereby have miserably divided themselves from that *one Spouse* of *CHRIST*. Your *Worship* is what with a safe Conscience I could never join in.

For in your publick Meetings, omitting fundry Things that are mighty chocking, both in your *Worship* and *Doctrine*, which, for certain Reasons, I must here forbear to name, you have most unwarily and imprudently laid aside (I may justly say) the very Life and Substance of our holy Religion; I mean, the *Publick Reading* of the *Holy Scriptures*, the *LORD'S Prayer*, the *Law* delivered by *GOD* himself from Mount *Sinai*, the *Apostles Creed* and the *Doxology*.

The using of all which, as chief and principal Parts in the *Publick Worship* of *GOD*, has ever been, and still is the constant and universal Practice, of all the particular *Churches* of *GOD* in the Christian World, except your own very singular and self-conceited Party, who, by a negative Uniformity, began first to disuse them within those last sixty or seventy Years.

And this they do, Sir, for no other Reason, that I can conceive, except a peevish

and affected Opposition, which they still delight to maintain, against all the laudable Practices of the universal *Church*; and because of the great Esteem and Value they have for their own *Words* and *Inventions*.

Which, that they may have Opportunity and Time to deliver, and thereby keep their Hearers in Ignorance, and involve them still more and more into *Schism* and *Rebellion*, they have for the main laid aside the Words indited by the unerring Spirit of GOD.

And yet, for all this, they have a Brow to offer Arguments; and do pretend to justify and defend this their singular *Neglect*, with as great Keennels as the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* did their most stupid Unbelief, when they spitefully opposed and denied the SON of GOD. But from the Beginning it was not so.

But had that *Candle*, which they have now so much buried under a *Busble*; I mean the *Holy Scriptures*, those most noble *Sermons* preached by the HOLY GHOST, been in large Portions constantly, gravely and distinctly read, in the Audience of the People, every LORD'S Day; which, as already was observed, has ever been the universal Practice of all the *Churches* of GOD; and wherein Obedience and Reverence to our *Spiritual* and *Civil* *Governors* is so strictly and frequently required and enjoined, and where *Rebellion* and
Schism

Schism are so justly and deservedly branded with their most foul and disgraceful *Characters*. It were impossible, I say, had this most ancient and excellent *Scripture-Practice*, together with those other *Primitive Forms* above-mentioned, been still kept in Use, that your new *Scheme of Presbytery* had ever got such Footing, or had stood so long, as to our woful Experience it has done in this Land.

Sir, I might easily enlarge upon this Subject, and shew you sundry other very weighty Reasons why I am not turn'd *Whig*, as you did, it seems, vainly imagine: But having already exceeded the Bounds of an ordinary Letter, and thereby perhaps wearied your Patience, when I have added, only a few Lines more, I shall have done.

What has here been said (which is in a great Measure owing to the above-cited Passage of your Letter) I being now, by the Authority of those whom I am bound to obey, determined to make publick, may, I hope, with the Blessing of God, be of some Use for clearing and vindicating oppressed *Truth*, to the unprejudiced Reader; and to put you in mind at least (for I well know, that nothing less than the Grace of God, obtainable by most earnest and fervent Prayer, together with the due Use of the other insti-

tuted Means, will ever be able to convince, either your self or any of your Party) of your most *wilful Mistakes* in these Matters, tho' of the greatest Importance.

For *Spiritual Pride*, Sir, or a most foolish Pretence to greater and higher Degrees of Holiness and Knowledge than your Neighbours (which is one of the principal Causes, and was at first the very Rise of your *Schism*) hath had still so much the Predominant over the Generality of your Party, and is now so far heightned by your present Prosperity, that, without the special Grace of God, Truths of this Nature, tho' with the greatest Clearness laid before you, are so far from humbling you, and making you yield, that they serve for no other Use but to gall you, to provoke and swell your Spleen against the *Author*, and to cause you rack your Invention, by misconstructing and wresting plain Texts of *Scripture*, and the clearest *Primitive Records*, to find out an *Answer*.

However, let me tell you, the doing so is very far from that excellent Use, which the Christian *Spirit* of Prudence and Meekness teaches you and me to make of these holy and venerable *Books*.

Now, Sir, forbearing to trouble you with any further Apology for this long Answer,

I do with all due Respect, offer your discreet kind Lady and you, my dutiful and very just Acknowledgments, for the many Civilities and Favours I have met with, first and last at your House.

Your good Friends here bid me, with all the obliging Marks of Civility and Respect, most kindly to salute your Lady and you in their Name; and I do the same also to her Ladyship in my own. So, wishing your pleasant Children, and you all, heartily well, I am,

Kind S I R,

Your affectionate and most

obedient Servant,

O^cob. 27th,

1725.

D 3

Th^o



The POSTSCRIPT.

S I R,

AFTER all I have said, I cannot yet forbear the putting you in Mind, of the most rude, irreverent, and unbecoming Posture, which in direct Opposition to the decent Practice of the Church, ye do generally and avowedly use, when ye make your solemn Addresses, by Prayer and Praise to Almighty GOD: As if His sacred Majesty were delighted, not with the *(a)* *Beauty*, as the *Psalmist* speaks, but with the *Deformity* of *Holiness*.

To sit on your Breech at your Tables at Home, while you beg Almighty GOD to bless, and do return His *Great Majesty* Thanks, for the temporal good Things of this Life, the necessary Support and Nourishment of the frail Body, without the due Use whereof, it would instantly crumble into Dust, is an Argument surely of no great inward

(a) *Psal.* 29. 2. and 96. 9.

ward Respect to the *Bountiful Giver*, pretend what you will.

A Behaviour also it is, the most absurd and unseemly, would ye but only take Notice and reflect, with how great Exactness you there ordinarily perform all due civil Respect to one another, immediately after.

To chose the same indecent Posture in the Church, which is the *Presence-chamber* on Earth, of the *Great King of Heaven*, while you are addressing His *Divine Majesty*, for so great and inestimable Blessings, as the Pardon of Sin, and Grace to live well ; and are singing Praises to his infinite Goodness, for what Measure of his heavenly Grace and Bounty ye have already received (and having the Head there often covered too) the doing so, is a Piece of irreligious Disrespect indeed ; yea certainly, it is a very great Insolence.

Again, to sit upon your Breech in the House of GOD, during the Prayer of *Consecration*, and while you are receiving at the Hands of him, whom *Ye* own to be the Ambassador of JESUS CHRIST, the sacred Pledges of his dying Love ; and being admitted into the *Guest-chamber* of the *Bridegroom*, our blessed Redeemer, are made Partakers of the commemorative *Sacrifice* of his meritorious Death, which is one of the highest

and most profound *Mysteries* of the Christian Religion : On such an holy Occasion I say, and in so holy a Place, to be in such an unmannerly Posture, is a Piece of the greatest Stupidity.

Sir, I know you will pretend, for this your irreverent and unmannerly *sitting* at the *Sacrament*, that our LORD and His Apostles did use the same, or the like Posture at its first Institution. But this it is impossible for any Man to prove from the sacred Text; For, tho' from thence it may appear, that they did *sit* while they were eating the *Passover*, yet it is not to be imagined, that our blessed SAVIOUR and His Apostles, whom every where else we find, either in a Posture of *Kneeling* or *Prostration*, in all their Addresses to Almighty GOD, should have continued then, most irreverently *sitting* and *chawing* in their Mouths the *Passover*, the very Time that the HOLY JESUS was instituting another new and holy *Rite*, to succeed instead thereof, by taking into his blessed Hands, the sacred Symbols of His Body and Blood, praying over them and blessing them;

For, by that Time, this sacred College had certainly betaken themselves to some decent Posture of Adoration, at the Consecration and Commencement of this holy Institution: And therefore, these Words, *As they*

they were eating, upon which you do certainly build your Hypothesis, can by no Means be taken here, as you understand them, in a strict and literal Sense, for the immediate Act of *Eating*, but only to signify, while they were celebrating the Festival of the *Passover*, or before that Solemnity was ended, and the Guests dismiss. In which large Sense, both these Words *eating* and *drinking* are frequently used in the Word of G O D.

So that you have neither Scripture-Precept nor Example, nor the least Footstep of primitive Practice, to justify your irreverent *sitting* at this most sacred Action, which by all means ought to be celebrate, as the Church in her great Wisdom hath enjoin'd, with profound Reverence, and in the most submissive and humble Frame and Posture, both of Body and Soul : Not in order to adore the Elements, as the *Romanists* superstitiously do, and as you most falsely alledge we do ; but the Holy J E S U S himself, the *Great Master* of the *Feast*, who is spiritually present there, and upon whose *Body* and *Blood*, there represented by the *Bread* and the *Wine*, every worthy Receiver doth feed, not in a corporal and carnal Manner, but spiritually by Faith, to his Soul's Health. Since our S A V I O U R himself hath expressly told us (*Jo. 6.*) *That 'tis the Spirit that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth nothing.* Now

Now therefore tell me, Sir, I beseech you, what other Pretence can ye possibly alledge, for this your singular and most unmannerly Carriage at the Performance of these religious Duties above-mentioned ? Is what our blessed SAVIOUR says, (*Jo. 4. 24.*) *GOD is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth*: Is this, I say, what ye pretend ?

Indeed, Sir, from this Text, and very many others in holy Writ, it is most evident that the *Intenseness* and *Sincerity* of the *Heart* and *Soul* is an indispensable, yea the very principal Ingredient in all our *religious Devotions*, without which, the greatest Demonstrations of outward Reverence are insignificant, and as St. *Paul* tells us, (*1. Tim. 4. 8.*) *do profite little*.

But from hence it can never be inferred, that *Bodily Worship* or *Adoration* is excluded, or in the least inconsistent with this true Devotion of the Soul ; which, your Behaviour proves to be the Opinion of your Party : Because, on the contrary, the same is expressly required and enjoined in the Word of GOD, authorised by our blessed LORD'S own Example and Practice, by the constant Practice of the *Church* of GOD, and that of holy and devout Men mentioned in Scripture.

See

See for this, 2. Chron. 20. 19. *And the Levites stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel with a loud Voice.* Neh. 9. 5. *Then the Levites said, Stand up, and bless the Lord your God.* Rev. 7. 9. *They stood before the Throne and before the Lamb, — and cried with a loud Voice, saying, Salvation, &c.* Psal. 95. 6. *O! come let us worship, let us bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* Isa. 45. 23. *I have sworn by my self, saith the Lord, that unto me every Knee shall bow.* Dan. 6. 10. *Daniel kneeled upon his Knees three Times a Day, and prayed.* Matt. 26. 39. *Our blessed LORD fell on his Face and prayed.* Luk. 22. 41. *He kneeled down and prayed.* Acts 7. 60. *St. Stephen kneeled down and cried with a loud Voice, LORD lay not this Sin to their Charge.* Acts 21. 5. *St. Paul with the Church at Tyre kneeled down upon the Sea-Shore and prayed.* And Numbers of other Texts to the same Purpose, which are abundantly sufficient to determine the Church in this Particular, and to oblige us, as the same Apostle directs, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *To glorify GOD both in our Bodies, and in our Souls, that are His.*

But why, Sir, should I multiply Texts of Scripture to you, though never so direct and apposite to the Purpose, since even the
Scripture

Scripture itself, in many Things, is not sufficient to determine you, especially where the same is seconded by the Church's Practice.

The Scriptures for Instance strictly injoin, when we *pray*, to say the LORD's Prayer. See for this *Luk. II. 2. And JESUS said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.* than which, no Precept can be more positive or more express: For which Reason, the Church has ever piously observ'd the same; and in every distinct Office of her *publick Worship*, expressly injoin'd this incomparable and most comprehensive *set Form* to be used.

Which you, for that very Reason, I believe, do scornfully disuse and neglect, and do call the so using it, (a) **A lifeless, senseless and loathsome Worship**; and the concluding our Prayers therewith, **An Engine of Hell, contrary to the Divine Prescript, and subversive of the Gospel of CHRIST**. All which Expressions, as you may easily observe, do certainly very nearly border, upon the most horrid Blasphemy.

But, it may very justly be suspected, without great Breach of Charity, That the grand Reason of your Disobedience in this Particular, flows from the Backwardness of your
revenge-

(a) See Mr. Hog's casuistical Essay, P. 318, 320.

revengeful and unrelenting Hearts, which by no Means will comply to ask Forgiveness of G O D Almighty upon his own *gracious Terms*; and to say from the Heart, in his Blessed S O N's most powerful and prevailing Words, *Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*

Sir, If unhappily there be any of so wild a Temper, I wish they could seriously lay to Heart this indispensable Condition, upon which G O D Almighty his gracious Forgiveness is expressly founded: *For if ye from the Heart forgive not Men their Trespases,* says our Blessed SAVIOUR, *not until seven Times only, but until seventy Times seven, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your Trespases.*

Again, Sir, the Scriptures, both by Precept and Example, do authorize the publick reading of the Word of G O D in the Congregation. See for this *Deut. 31. 11. When all Israel is come to appear before the LORD thy G O D, in the Place which he shall chuse, thou shalt read this Law before all Israel, in their hearing.* And *Neb. 8. 3. Ezra read therein (viz. the Book of the Law) from the Morning until Mid-day, before the Men and the Women, and those that could understand: and the Ears of all the People were attentive unto the Book of the Law.*

'Tis

'Tis said, it is true, in the 8th Verse following, *That they did read the Law of GOD distinctly, and gave the Sense, and caused them to understand the reading*; the clear and certain Import whereof is unquestionably this, *That after the Law was distinctly read, the Clergy did expound or interpret to the People the original Hebrew, the Language whereinto the Law was written, which, by their long seventy Years Captivity in a strange Land, they were quite ignorant of. But this was neither Preaching nor Lecturing in the modern Sense, as some through Ignorance and Prejudice may perhaps alledge.*

Now, Sir, to shew, that the *publick reading* of the Scriptures in the Congregation, was a constant Part of the *Sabbath-days Service*, see *Acts 13. 14. 15.* *Paul and Barnabas went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and sat down, and after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the Rulers of the Synagogue sent unto them, &c.* And Verse 27th of the same Chapter we are told, *That the Prophets were read every Sabbath-day.* And *Acts 15. 21.* *That Moses was read in the Synagogue every Sabbath-day.*

And that this most useful and necessary Practice was also to continue in the *Christian Church*, as from fundry other Texts of Scripture, so may we particularly learn from
hence,

hence, that *Timothy* is commanded by *St. Paul* (*1 Tim. 4. 13.*) *To give Attendance to reading, as well as to Exhortation and Doctrine.* And from the same *Apostle's* Command (*Col. 4. 16.*) *When this Epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the Church of the Laodiceans: and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea, &c.*

Now, Sir, the Church, in Conformity to these Instances and Examples of Holy Scripture, hath always religiously perform'd this Duty of reading the Word of G O D in the Congregation; Four or more Chapters, besides Psalms, every LORD'S Day, and every other Day of publick Worship: But the doing so, you disdainfully slight and despise, except a few Verses, which at your Discretion ye read for a Text or a Lecture: Which, as you see, is far from observing Scripture-practice, and the primitive and constant Practice of the Church in this Matter.

And thus, Sir, to the Regret of many serious intelligent Christians, do ye most unwarily behave in fundry other Particulars. I do sincerely beseech Almighty G O D, of his great Goodness, to enlighten your Understandings, and to rectify your
perverse

perverse and crooked Wills, that ye may
at length see, and speedily return to the
good old Paths, that lead us all to Life and
Happinefs eternal. *Adieu!*

F I N I S.

